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County Awarded \$800,000 Grant To Improve Public Safety Communications

Waukesha, WIS. – Waukesha County will receive an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for mobile data computers (MDCs) and related equipment to improve law enforcement communications and interoperability for agencies partnering in consolidated dispatch.

Public agencies in urban areas were encouraged to apply for funding through the federal department's Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) to enhance regional capabilities to prevent, respond to and recover from an act of terrorism. Waukesha, Milwaukee and Washington counties, as well as the city of Milwaukee qualified for grant monies regionally.

County Executive Dan Vrakas said, "I am pleased that Waukesha County was awarded this federal grant to improve public safety communications. By accepting these funds, the county and its Communication Center partners will be able to implement advanced technology that will result in more efficient response times to critical needs in the community."

The county's Department of Emergency Preparedness – Disaster Management program will administer the funds to purchase MDCs, radio and modem units, software licenses for users to access the county's records management system and voice less computer-aided dispatch functions, and software interfaces. It will also be used to cover technology installation costs.

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“County Awarded \$800,000 Grant To Improve Public Safety Communications,” continued...

“The agencies that have invested in consolidated dispatch made an important decision to partner with other government entities to provide their residents with an exceptional emergency communications infrastructure,” said Vrakas. “This equipment will raise the level of preparedness amongst these public safety trustees, and will in effect provide the citizens with better service delivery and greater protection in the event of a terrorist attack.”

Pending County Board approval, the Sheriff’s Department has already budgeted \$70,000 to be used in 2006 for the purchase of additional mobile data computer related equipment, like squad car mounts and docking station connections, which are not covered by the UASI grant.

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